

# **Joint Meeting of the Radioactive Materials Transportation Committee and the Transuranic Waste Transportation Working Group**

Sheraton Pittsburgh Station Square  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
June 8, 2017

## **Meeting Summary**

The Southern States Energy Board's (SSEB) Joint Meeting of the Radioactive Materials Transportation Committee and the Transuranic Waste Transportation Working Group occurred on June 8, 2017. The event was held at the Sheraton Pittsburgh Station Square Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in conjunction with the National Transportation Stakeholders Forum (NTSF).

Mr. Christopher Wells, Assistant Director of Nuclear Programs for the Southern States Energy Board, welcomed the group, discussed a few brief business matters and provided general logistical announcements. Additionally, Mr. Wells reminded the group the meeting would be very short since the majority of program updates were delivered to the entire audience during the NTSF plenary session. More specifically, he noted the gathering would consist of only a few formal PowerPoint presentations in addition to several quick visits by federal agency partners to address programmatic questions and/or concerning issues. Following these remarks, Mr. Wells introduced Mr. Alan Jacobson of Maryland who was serving as the Chairman of the Radioactive Materials Transportation Committee. Mr. Jacobson formally commenced the meeting by initiating the introduction of all meeting participants. After introductions were complete, he began calling forth the presenters as listed on the meeting agenda.

The first speaker of the meeting was Mr. Jeff Galan of the U.S. Nuclear Material Removal Program within the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). Mr. Galan informed the group he could not discuss specific details regarding the two ongoing NNSA campaigns he was managing because it would violate safeguards protocols. Therefore Mr. Galan spoke in generalities about both the U.S. Origin Nuclear Material Removal Program whose aim is reducing and protecting vulnerable nuclear and radiological material located at civilian sites worldwide and the Canadian Campaign initiated in the summer of 2015 to return highly-enriched uranium (HEU) from the Chalk River facility in Ontario to the Savannah River Site (SRS).

He noted both shipments traverse many southern states en route to SRS and thus he thanked SSEB for coordinating with its members along the corridor for transportation and emergency response planning efforts. Mr. Galan yielded the remainder of his presentation time to Mr. Blake Williams of Secured Transportation Services. Mr. Williams' organization handles all of the logistical arrangements for transporting the shipments. He spoke briefly about procedures utilized during both campaigns and noted how the Transportation Emergency Preparedness Program and Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance training regimens instituted along the route had efficiently and effectively impacted the shipments.

The next speaker was Mr. Carlisle Smith, Director of the Hazardous Materials Program of the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA). Mr. Smith gave a summary of the year in review of the Level VI Program. He identified the certification classes that had taken place in the southern region and reminded those states who were in need of training to retain their certification standard. He also spoke about the Level VI Program Peer Review best practices and lessons learned. Lastly, Mr. Smith talked about his participation in the March 2017 Southern Corridor WIPP Roadshow which allowed him an audience to speak about the merits of the CVSA Program, connect inspectors with their state counterparts in the WIPP campaign and perform a rudimentary gap assessment to identify any equipment needs or other resources.

Mr. Andy Blenko, Pennsylvania Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteer was the next speaker to address the group. His discussion was designed for emergency responders to learn and relay information to appropriate parties in their organizations and communities. He began the presentation by displaying headlines of tragic events involving trains which involved pedestrians and vehicles. He supported those headlines with statistics from each state displaying accident and fatality rates. He told the audience to be aware of trains at rail crossing as they are not maneuverable, weigh as much as 12 million pounds and when traveling 55mph take approximately a mile to come to a complete stop. The most important steps, according to Mr. Blenko, when stranded on the tracks or observing a potential accident is to get away and locate the Emergency Notification System sign and call the number provided and report the incident. He also warned not to rely on train horns as a primary safety mechanism because some communities have established quiet zones where horns are not routinely sounded. He explained the difference between active and passive crossings and illustrated how a truck can get stuck on a crossing if there is insignificant clearance. He alerted the members not to stand close to tracks as trains and their loads are wider than the actual track. In conclusion, he informed the committee how pedestrians often ignore the fact the rail is private property and therefore you should not trespass, walk on the tracks or enter tunnels.

The Transportation Emergency Preparedness Program (TEPP) Review was delivered by Ken Keaton of TRG Incorporated. Mr. Keaton told the committees he would provide an overview of the training taken place to date, activities scheduled for the near future, training program revisions, improvement projects

and available website resources. He displayed a chart with the FY 2017 training courses in the southern region (46 classes - 14 of which were delivered by state instructors) as well as the number of students (653) who have received credit. Mr. Keaton noted (20) MERRTT and CMERRTT classes were scheduled throughout the southern region for the remainder of the year as well as (11) Technician Modular Emergency Response Radiological Transportation Training (TMERRTT) sessions in various states (GA, KY and WV). He noted the possibility of (4) Radiation Specialist Courses across the nation ranging from June thru September pending the availability of funding. He briefly spoke about the (3) full-scale live source exercises in Morgantown, West Virginia and (3) tabletops to be conducted in Louisville, Kentucky during FY2017. Next, he talked about completing the MERRTT revision process and how DVDs were produced in May. He distributed a few of the new MERRTT modules and noted he would send instructions, via email to the attention of Mr. Wells, for SSEB members to obtain copies. He provided an update of the TEPP Improvement Projects including continued agency cooperation with the National Fire Protection Association regarding hazardous materials/weapons of mass destruction applicable standards and practices in addition to working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Center for Domestic Preparedness to explore the possibility of offering a Radiation Specialist course on FEMA's campus and participating with the agency in a computer based training development course. Lastly, Mr. Keaton gave the attendees a website address for TEPP resources.

The final speaker for the SSEB Radioactive Materials Transportation Committees Meeting was Barry Miles of the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program. Mr. Miles initiated the presentation by stating that the U.S. Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program is a joint effort between the DOE and the Department of Navy and its responsibility is for the "cradle to grave" oversight of the nuclear reactors onboard submarines and aircraft carriers. This task includes spent fuel transportation to the examination and storage facility at the Idaho National Laboratory (INL). The fuel is moved from numerous shipyards which handle refueling and defueling operations. These facilities are located in Portsmouth, New Hampshire / Portsmouth, Virginia / Newport News, Virginia / and Bremerton, Washington. The program has been in existence since 1948 and has been moving fuel by dedicated rail since 1957. The one exception to the rail policy is one prototype at a site in New York that must be heavy hauled to a rail spur. Over the history of the program, additional shipments did occur in the past out of the southern region via the Joint Base Charleston in Goose Creek, South Carolina and also from a station in Pascagoula, Mississippi. Mr. Miles described how the shipments were safe because of the rugged nature of the fuel. It is designed to withstand battle conditions and all the fission products are contained within the fuel components which are none explosive, non-corrosive and non-flammable. The shipments are transported in Type B Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) certified containers designed and built to provide safety in the most severe of accident scenarios. The M-290 is a dumbbell configuration cask which weighs approximately 760,000 pounds gross on rail as opposed to the

M-140 which employs a vertical configuration and is about 530,000 pounds. Another reason for their safety record is the response capability; being that Navy personnel designated as federal officers' escort the shipments and can aid in response and recovery.

Mr. Miles noted that shipments from the Portsmouth sites are transported in the M-140 container with a frequency of approximately two every 12 -18 months. The Newport News site is involved in the refueling of aircraft carriers which occurs every 2-3 years. These operations result in 10 containers of spent fuel being transported to INL in a variety of shipment configurations over a period of 12 months. Mr. Miles went on to say that the shipments are a matter of national security and therefore states do not receive advance notification of when movements will occur. However, the program provides briefings to law enforcement and other agencies to familiarize them with the basics of the campaigns. In addition, transportation exercises are held around the country to further inform the states of the intricacies of the program. The most recent shipment accident exercise occurred on June 1<sup>st</sup> in Mechanicville, New York. Mr. Miles displayed several slides detailing the accident scenario (dump truck colliding with M-140), location and the participating agencies. Mr. Miles ended his presentation by speaking briefly about a minor incident that occurred involving a Naval shipment with an empty M-140 container in a rail yard in the Buffalo, New York area in 2005. He also speculated the next Navy shipment accident exercise may occur in one of SSEB's member states.

Next, SSEB welcomed their federal partners to address the Radioactive Materials Transportation Committees in an informal question and answer session pertaining to radioactive materials transportation issues. The participating federal agencies included DOE's Carlsbad Field Office, Office of Environmental Management, Office of Nuclear Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

The remaining portion of the meeting consisted of a round table discussion to highlight the activities of all states in attendance. After all states had provided an update, Mr. Wells reported on the status of activities at SSEB.

The final order of business at the meeting was the announcement of the location and date of the next meeting of the Radioactive Materials Transportation Committee and the Transuranic Waste Transportation Working Group. Since the group continues to meet in conjunction with the NTSF for their Spring meeting, it was reported that they would convene for the winter gathering in the December timeframe. Potential locations included Nashville (TN) or Austin (TX).

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